

PREFACE.

A few preliminary remarks on the history, scope and contents of the Garuda Puranam may be necessary. The Garuda Puranam may be safely described as a sister work to the Agni Puranam. Each of them treats of Para VidyA and Apari VidyA. secular knowledge and metaphysical truths, and parallels more of the nature of a catechism of the then prevailing Brahmanism, or of what the Brahmana was required to know at the time, than of the Puranas proper, at least if we may be admitted to look upon the Rgveda or the Mahabharatam as the model of that class of literature. Superficially conforming to the Rubrics of Pancha Sandhis, etc., the Garuda Puranam, like its sister work, reflects but the knowledge of the Brhadharmasutra world at the time, and had its uses then as it has even now.

Without doing violence to the antiquarian instinct, we must say that it is quite futile to attempt to lay down the precise date of the composition of the Garuda Puranam. Its name occurs in the Mahabharata's *Brahmana*. Sarvaśarmā Chakrapani Datta has quoted many a recipe from it, and the *Viskambha Dharmasutra*, according to several eminent authorities, originally formed a portion of the Garuda Puranam. All these 'facts' emphatically demonstrate the fact that, the Garuda Puranam was in

existence even before the tenth century of the Christian Era,
On the contrary, we have reasons to believe that, hosts of
Puras and Upapuras'were composed in the age of Brah-
manic renaissance, which immediately followed the
overthrow of Buddhism in India The Garuda Puranm, like
the Agni,
Shiva, Padma, and the Sakti Puranas were the
exponents of
the victorious Brahmanism, which, being inevitably
divided into
schisms, tried to invest the tutelary duty of
each sect with